97-84001-18

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The differential essence of religion

[New York]

[1914]

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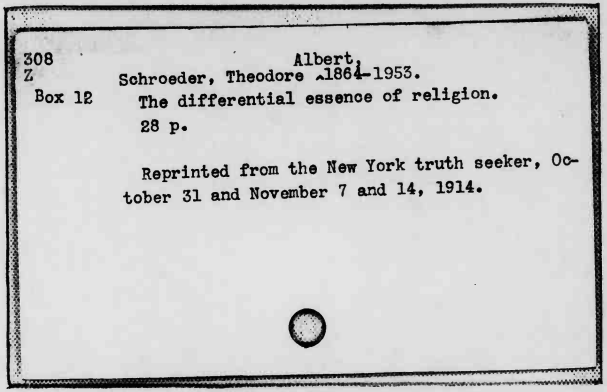

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FILM SIZE: 35mm REDUCTION RATIO: 11:1 IMAGE PLACEMENT: IA (IIA) IB IIB

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THE DIFFERENTIAL

Essence of Religion

Reprinted from the NEW YORK TRUTH SEEKER,
October 31 and November 7 and 14. 1914.

THE DIFFERENTIAL

Essence of Religion

BY THEODORE SCHROEDER.

More and more the controversy concerning religious fundamentals is recognized to be within the domain of psychology. This shifting of the issues requires a reconsideration of our definitions of religion. We have plenty of definitions, descriptive of the outward manifestations of religion. What is now needed is a statement of its differential essence. We have plenty of definitions which generalize the essentials of a particular religion—of "true" and "false" religion. What is needed is to formulate the common element of *all* religions. We have some illuminating definitions of religion which generalize the results of very careful introspection. What is now needed is to derive the differential essence of religion by studying religious phenomena objectively, with the view to discovering and formulating the elements of unification underlying these phenomena.

This is not a matter of finding some differential between "true" and "false" religion. Neither is this an inquiry into the relative degree of failure or success achieved by the religious in their efforts to live their religious ideals. The real task is the discovery of the common element, by the virtue of which even a "false" religion is to be adjudged religious and not secular error. In other words, the purpose of the inquiry is the differential religious essences which antedate and determine religious creeds and conduct (irrespective of the quality of

either the proffered justifying argument or the creed, ceremonial or life) the total absence of which would be the negation of all religion, either true or false.

Only crude thinkers will fail to recognize that a difference exists between the errors of a religion and the total absence of every essential of religiosity, or assume that everything can be made a matter of religion merely by calling it so, or that everything thus labeled is necessarily religious. Moral quacks, venders of reform cure-alls, sociological astrologers, political theologasters, not less than true religious mystics, may be found to appropriate religious trademarks, thinking thereby to secure for themselves a "respectable" rating, and for their wares a more ready market.

Before the discussion proceeds it will be well to remind ourselves that from the evolutionary viewpoint nature has no clear cut lines of demarkation. Where all is gradual change it is to be expected that religion, pure and undefiled by secularism or science, probably is not to be found. Yet it is a phenomenon which can be understood only through a study of the behavior of its related psychic forces. In one sense we therefore must study religion as an abstraction, at least theoretically dissociated from the accompanying antagonistic mental attitudes.

Furthermore, our experience with the physical sciences suggests the probability that by the objective method we cannot attain a knowledge of the religious essence in and of itself, but that we will be limited to a general knowledge of its essential and therefore uniform qualities of behavioristic mechanism, as distinguished from the outward manifestations through consciousness, where these essential qualities probably attached themselves to

and express themselves by means of a variety of other experiences and symbols.

The necessity for having differential criteria of religion arises from the fact that we need the means for classifying persons and phenomena which exist in the borderland of doubtful religiosity. Furthermore, by considering the matter of objective standards of religion we are preparing the field for a psychogenetic study of religion.

For the purpose of discovering the elements of unification in all religion, for the present we must exclude from consideration all those who do not give plain evidence that religion is a positive and vital influence in their own lives; also those with whom religious creeds are a matter of mere sympathetic or contrary imitation. Such persons may not have enough of either the essentials of any particular religion, or of religion in general, to make the present study of them profitable from the viewpoint of the clarity or the conclusiveness of our result. Their self-classification is mostly the unconscious imitation of social custom, and as such, is still useful but not the best material for our present purpose.

We must also exclude from present consideration another class of thoughtful dwellers in the borderland. I refer to those well-meaning harmonizers of science and religion who, in large numbers and by the authority of long habit, have almost established it as an axiom that the "middle ground" is always right. Those who make conscious effort to justify the middle ground do so mainly for two reasons: A blurred vision, and the inherent timidity of conscious weakness, the product of psychic complexes not causally related to religion.

The nature of the problem seems to require that at first we eliminate from our study all that is pro-

claimed to be predominantly non-religious and all that is doubtful as to its religious quality, either in doctrine, ceremonial or life. Thus by a progressive elimination we may segregate some unquestionable religious phenomena, with a minimum admixture of the secular, and then by an objective study of these as manifested in some persons conspicuously religious and contrasted with aspects of similar problems from the viewpoint of those admittedly dominated by secularism, we may arrive at a generalization which will present, with substantial accuracy, the true differential essence of religion.

Outward Manifestations Non-Essential.

Unquestionably, religious men have duplicated every crime committed by others, ofttimes even in the name of their religion. The same is true of their virtues. Religious persons profess varying codes of ethics and scientific convictions which others may also profess, both with and without honesty. The religious perform ceremonies, which others also may perform with joy to themselves. They entertain opinions and hopes, all of which are entertained by some who are not religious, and all of which others deny who are unquestionably very religious. From these facts of common knowledge, we may tentatively infer that the religious man cannot be differentiated from the non-religious by any indispensable conduct, credal statement, or attitude toward the outer world, and on the contrary that the *differential essence of religion is to be found in subjective states, sources, or processes.*

This conclusion has the endorsement of eminent religionists. Says the Rev. Dr. Stoddard: "All visible signs are common to converted and unconverted men, and a relation of experiences among the rest." (Stoddard's "Appeal to the Learned,"

p. 75; requoted from Edwards' "Religious Affections," pp. 88-112.) To which the Rev. Jonathan Edwards adds: "No external manifestations and outward appearances whatsoever that are visible to the world, are infallible evidence of grace.' ("Religious Affections," p. 384.) Emerson in his diary as a young man wrote this: "Christianity is wrongly conceived by all such as take it for a system of doctrines."

So it appears, according to these undoubtedly religious persons, that none of the outward or doctrinal manifestations are of the essence of religion as such, though it appears historically that any of them may be, and almost everything has been, deemed an indispensable element of some particular religion. This confirms our hypothesis that the essence of religion is to be found in subjective states, sources, or processes. However, before accepting this as final we must check it up with reference to some of the more general and more important religious doctrines. In this connection it will be helpful to consider the difference of mental attitude toward beliefs in gods, immortality, ethics, etc., as these are entertained by the religionist and the scientist respectively.

Belief in God Non-Essential.

That belief in God or gods is not an indispensable element of religion is the conclusion of many who have studied the history of religions. The Buddhists furnish phenomena unquestionably religious, yet admittedly do not believe in a God. Likewise, there is nothing in the religion of the Brahmin which can properly be called a God. What we carelessly designate as his "God" is, in fact, but a subjective substitute. The Vedantist believes in a self within the person which is the carrier of his

personality, and a self without the person, which is the carrier of the world—" 'God the highest self'—and these two selves are ultimately the same self." In its adaptation to modern mystic cults, man sometimes comes to be described as "a conscious center of the all-mind." (The *Open Court.*)

It is doing violence to language to assert that the founder of "Christian Science" believes in God as any sort of an objective entity, and without the implication of objective existence the use of the word "God" becomes figurative and confusing. When Mrs. Eddy writes "the allness of mind and the nothingness of matter," and "God is love and love is God," it is because, for the moment, as one under the influence of an opiate or from an obsessively intense love-feeling or ecstatic trance, she has ceased to be conscious of any relations with the non-ego, and in these "soul-flights" she therefore denies the reality of objectives. She is without a God-concept, and without a belief in an unknowable reality, as the objective stimulus of her religious sentiments. She apotheosizes only love-feeling, and the word "God" symbolizes only that feeling, not an objectivity nor even its subjective image. Her efforts at describing her feeling-states in terms of objectives lead her unavoidably into that verbal fantasticism which so successfully eludes all efforts at translation into concepts not mutually destructive.

For "God," in the literal sense of the word, she has a feeling-substitute, probably identical with, but differently interpreted from the "feeling-background" which for others certifies to the inerrancy of their ideas of God and his will. Yet we cannot well deny Mrs. Eddy's religiosity, since she furnishes much of the phenomena which we are to study and differentiate. In one aspect she is even more religious than many of her contemporaries,

since she—more clearly than they—exemplifies the truth generally accepted by the devout, that "the kingdom of God [religion] is within you" and is subjective.

An idealistic philosophy may be a product of the analysis of consciousness, of the knowing processes, and of an inquiry into the sufficiency of the evidence to justify our belief in the existence of objective realities. In such cases the data of consciousness are objectively considered. Not so with Mrs. Eddy, and her idealism. Mrs. Eddy scorns "the erring testimony of mortal sense." Even an analysis of it is beneath her. It is of course possible to reach conclusions similar to hers by the more or less accurate use of the scientific method, thus making these conclusions the expression of a belief within the domain of science or philosophy. Mrs. Eddy's idealism, without even a pretense at scientific processes, evidently is the mere interpretation of subjective feeling-states, the apotheosis of love. It therefore seems that this is the very essence which makes her idealism religious.

All these varying religio-idealistic speculations are but different explanations of the subjective states, love-feeling, which accompany and induce the thought of God, with those who religiously believe in God. From such considerations it is evident that this wholly subjective source for the presence or absence of a belief in God and the belief in one's personal relations or identification with him, is that which distinguishes the religious from its corresponding scientific or philosophic belief. It is important to check and clarify this still further.

Scientific Belief in God.

If belief in a God is not an indispensable phenomenon of religion, it follows that such belief with-

out some regard to the source thereof or reason therefor cannot constitute the subject of it a religious person. Like Thomas Paine, one may say, "I believe in one God and no more," and yet not be in the least degree religious in any sense in which the word is used by those whose religious status is quite beyond question.

An application of the processes or synthesis and analysis to the objective order of the relation among things, which results in the denial of all superphysical existences, or of superhuman intelligence, is purely a secular method to a scientific conclusion, although it may be about a subject of religious contemplation. If, however, the use of the same method results in a belief in the existence of one intelligent power maintaining a moral order in the universe, this is still a matter of science or philosophy, not of religion. The methods and generalizations of science may verify or modify our religious convictions, but alone are not, and cannot initiate, religion. Evidently, something must supplement or precede a scientific process or conclusion before it can be classified as religion. The only alternative is a denial of all possibility of differentiating the religious from the non-religious phenomena.

The foregoing conclusions have the endorsement of very eminent religionists. For example, the Rev. Jonathan Edwards says: "He that has doctrinal knowledge and speculation only without affection, never is engaged in the business of religion." ("Religious Affection," p. 23.) To this we may add the testimony of the Rev. G. W. Allen: "'Can a man by searching find out God?' The presumed answer is 'no.' Mark now the different attitude with regard to this answer taken by the Materialist, the mystic, and him who stands between the two, the intellectual theologian. The Materialist says at once, 'Then let us devote our efforts to what we can find out.' The intellectual theologian says, 'If we cannot find God, we can perhaps find out something about him.' The mystic says, 'If I cannot find God perhaps God can fine me.'" (*Hibbert Journal*, Vol. 3, p. 272, Jan. 1905.)

Such evidence can be multiplied indefinitely and emphasizes the facts that belief in a God is not of the essence of religion and that such belief to be religious must have the subjective warrant of an "indwelling God" come to consciousness to make it so. If this subjective warrant for a belief in God does not precede the rationalizing process then it is a mere conclusion of philosophical speculation and as such no longer religion. Now we may see more clearly the difference between religious belief and a corresponding scientific conviction about a religious subject matter.

Belief in Personal Immortality Non-Essential.

One need but examine some historic religions to see that belief in an individual post-mortem life either physical or "spiritual" is not an indispensable element of religion. Buddhism is a clear demonstration. The Buddhist believes only in Nirvana. There is a state of blissful repose, which the Hindoo realizes when, through the prescribed discipline of his religion, he has extinguished Karma, or the principle of individual existence within himself, and has thereby obtained deliverance from the doom of the Samsara, or unending temporal cycle of deaths and reincarnations. Nirvana in its primary meaning has no temporal reference, and hence is not a state to be attained only after death. The whole world of individuality including death is a sphere of Maia or illusion; hence, Nirvana is but a cessation of the useless striving after individual ex-

istence. (Baldwin's "Dictionary of Philosophy and Psychology.")

Vedantism, whose most distinguished European disciple was Prof. Max Müller, also proves the point. According to this doctrine of Brahminism, death is but the merger of self into the "all-self." Very similar to this are several familiar Western mystic cults recently organized, according to which death is an absorption into "the all-mind," etc. These, of course, are each but an idealistic counterpart of the materialistic view that death ends all individual life, which, with as little inaccuracy could be described as an extinction of the individual by "absorption" of the physical body into the "all-matter." The idealist denies the reality of matter and the other denies all super-physical existence.

"The Samaritan held with the Sadducees that there was no resurrection nor life eternal." ("A View of All Religions," p. 19, by Rev. Alexander Ross.) Wu Tingfang, the Chinese ambassador to the United States, says: "It must not be said that Confucius denies the existence of these things [relating to the immortality of the soul], but regards all speculation upon them as useless and impracticable. He would be called an Agnostic in these days. 'What is death?' asked a disciple of him, and he replied, 'You don't know life yet, how can you know about death?'" ("Evolution of Immortality," p. 39.)

"The fact is that only in Christendom and Islam is the essential immortality of the individual spirit assumed. To the contention that belief in eternal life has been held always and everywhere and by all men, the only reply is that the facts are not so." (S. D. McConnell, D.D., in "Evolution of Immortality," p. 40.)

If belief in a spiritual, personal life, after physical death, is not an indispensable element of religion, it follows that the affirmation of such belief, standing alone, cannot constitute one a religious person. We may attempt to apply purely scientific methods to the testimony of others (Spiritualists, for example), or to the facts of the physical universe, and reach the conclusion (more or less logically) that there is such a post-mortem personal life. But that conviction, thus reached, is a conclusion within the domain of science or philosophy, not a religious conviction. It is a scientific conviction upon a religious subject of contemplation, but is not in itself religion. As well might one say that belief in a table of logarithms, or in the statement of the law of gravity, makes the believer a religious person, simply because innumerable religious persons believe them to be true and useful.

Here we see the same distinction as in our consideration of the belief in God. Belief in a future existence, as we now see, must be classified as secular or religious, according to its source, its reason for being; and such belief in itself is not an essential of religion in general. It is this subjective source of authority which gives the religious stamp to a conviction favoring belief in immortality.

Morals Not the Essence of Religion.

What is true of theology or the doctrine of immortality, in relation to religion, for the same reasons, will be found equally true of morals. To show this let us begin by calling the Rev. Batchelor to the witness stand. He says: "Religion does not begin in ethics. It did not grow out of ethics. It was before ethics in origin and has during a great part of human history wrought in life independently of and not infrequently in distinct opposition to the ethical sentiment. Let all sense of ethical obliga-

tion be destroyed, or reduce it again to the level of the prehistoric standard, and still religion would none the less be a power in human life not to be disregarded." ("Religion Its Own Evidence," p. 19.)

Next we quote Professor Everett, of Brown University. He says (*International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. x, p. 479): "That religion may be non-ethical finds numerous illustrations in the history of the world's religions. Indeed, at a certain stage, many primitive religions appear to have been non-ethical. That of Rome continued for centuries, remaining to the last almost exclusively formal and ritualistic. The statement that ethics may be non-religious finds abundant support in modern life, as in the case of positivists."

To this we may add the testimony of the Rev. Geo. Wm. Knox, of Union Theological Seminary. He says (*International Journal of Ethics*, Vol. xii, p. 305): "Religion is to be distinguished from ethics. Even when somewhat developed, it may have no ethical code. It is said that Shinto has for its teaching only this: fear God and obey the emperor! But in its earlier books there is not even this teaching, nothing which implies either as an ethical maxim. The later writers explain this unusual feature by saying that the Japanese, being holy by nature, need no moral code; which was invented by immoral folk like the Hindoos and Chinese."

Theological Morals vs. Ethics.

To illustrate that the nature of the conflict between religious morals and ethics is identical with the conflict already pointed out, we may quote a few competent observers, beginning with Prebendary Wace. He said: "Morality cannot for practical purposes be left to rest on scientific experiences. . . . It is essential in practice, to the welfare of individuals and of society alike, that the chief false routes of moral life should be barred by plain and authoritative prohibitions." ("Ethics and Religion," Jour. of Victoria Institute, 1901, Vol. xxxiii.) He also informs us that "The eternal relations of the *heart* to a perfect being, towards whom every emotion of love and gratitude can be indulged to the highest degree," is a higher purpose and motive for right living than can be supplied by natural law. By thus making religious ethics a matter of "heart" we are made to see its essential subjective character.

Professor Sedgwick considers *the moral ought* as an "ultimate and unanalyzable fact" (*Mind*, October, 1889), which is thereby relegated to the transcendental.

Mortensen says: "Truly if the light of religion be extinguished no reason is perceptible for leading a moral life in all these finite and temporal relations." ("Christian Ethics," p. 16.)

"Blind obedience to extraneous law does not approve itself to us as really moral. . . . The question concerning the ground of our moral obligations finds an adequate solution only in God." (Rev. Otto Pfleiderer in *Am. Jour. of Theology*, April, 1899, iii, 238.)

In religious ethics the appeal is to "the reality which transcends that which now is and that which now is known," is the opinion of the Rev. Geo. Wm. Knox ("Religion and Ethics, *Internat. Jour. of Ethics*, v, 315.) Thus we see that in religious morals as in religious theology the reliance upon "transcendental' authority can manifest itself to the individual only in subjective states which are interpreted as due to transcendental causes, giving

a transcendental sanction, and are usually called a religious conscience.

The Transition Towards Secular Mortality.

With that religionist whose mind is *wholly* "uncorrupted" by the scientific method, his religion, its methods and aims, will determine all his mental processes. As man gets away from the religious mental methods, more and more of his conclusions will be determined by the secular or scientific method, which deals with objective evidence, and progressively fewer subjects of thought will be conceded to the domain of religious or subjective method. This evolution from the first to the second marks the transitional stage from the all-religious to the all-scientific. Many are in that stage of development where they appear willing to use the scientific method as to practically all subjects except morals.

The following is a distinct second stage, illustrating secularization in an advanced theologian. "Religion must ever anew measure its inherited ideas and customs against the standard of the ethical ideals [otherwise acquired?], and in so far as they do not harmonize with that it must strive for their purification and progressive development. . . . It may be justly demanded that its teachings shall not conflict with what has been established as theoretical or practical truth, and especially that it shall not lag behind our ethical ideals." (Rev. Otto Pfleiderer, *Am. Journ. of Theol.*, April, 1899, pp. 225-249.) But how are we to judge of differing standards? Which is the one that is lagging behind and which running ahead? This author seems to demand that even the religious authority in matters of ethics may properly be subordinated to the standards of science, leaving religion supreme only where science is silent.

In this progression toward the secularization of our morals, the Ethical Culture movement represents the "last ditch" of the religious method in resisting the secular advance. In the following quotation we see a non-theological religious morality in full force, with the ecstatic enthusiasm of the revival convert but slightly impaired. One can readily imagine the exhorter's impassioned tones accompanying this statement from the Ethical Culturist.

"There is," he says, "no reason why men, become conscious of their responsibilities and of the great issues at stake [in ethical conduct], should not be touched with reverence and awe as they think of these things, and should not become hushed and subdued. Morality would then become a religion to men, in the fundamental and indeed universally recognized sense of the term. Morality as I conceive it, morality as I have tried—and yet too well know I am unable to picture it—morality as conscious, willing, glad subordination to the universal law of life, morality as lifting one to comradeship with suns and stars, because it is faithful as they; morality *loving the law of life more than life;* morality ready to die rather than to be untrue—that morality may be the very ideal which one may seek all one's life to follow, *that may be the supreme passion to a man, down on his knees he may bow before it,* as he may before Jesus, or before Buddha, or any other son of man who has exemplified the ideal, or made it any brighter before his eyes. Aye, then it is plain the sense in which Religion and Morality may become one." (Rev. Wm. Salter in "Morality and Religion," p. 33.)

It is apparent that some Ethical Culturists have

that same passionate devotion to moral law which the Brahmin manifests for the law of Manu, the Persian for the laws of Zoroaster, the Mohammedan for his Koran, the Protestant Christian for his Bible, the Catholic for his "permanent oracle of the divine will" at Rome, and the Mormon for the utterances of his "Prophet, Seer and Revelator," who is the Utah pope; and each endorsing something which some others denounce as immoral. It is also apparent that the same subjective source of authority exists in all these cases, though it attaches itself to or is interpreted as endorsing varying codes.

Take the following words of Mr. Mangasarian, when he was still connected with the Ethical Culture movement, as conclusive proof: "Ethical Culture is the religion of the spirit. . . . Ethics is the heart of religion. . . . *It is impossible to learn from the physical world the lesson of morality.* . . . Whenever we protest against wrong *it is from within* that we draw our inspiration. . . . Ethical Culture is a spiritual religion." ("The Religion of Ethical Culture," by M. M. Mangasarian, Phila.)

The Ethics of Science.

To make the irrepressible conflict between varying religious morals and ethical science still more evident, it becomes desirable to quote some of the standard writers upon ethics, to show what is their source of ethical authority and what are their varying criteria of the moral life.

As to the source of ethical authority, Clifford says that the "Maxims of ethics are hypothetical maxims, derived from experience and based on the assumption of the uniformity of nature." ("Religion and Ethics," by Rev. Geo. Wm. Knox, in *Internat. Jour. of Ethics*, v, 305.)

Another offers this: "Morality springs from those human relationships in which the individual finds himself compelled to live and act. It has its roots in the needs physical and mental, which other human beings can satisfy and in the sympathies which answer to those needs." Science "seeks to find the sanction of morality in the natural and inevitable results of the conduct itself and to establish morality on a rational basis by exhibiting the inescapable consequences of right and wrong action, of good and evil character, as in themselves sufficient grounds for the choice of the one and the avoidance of the other. As a science it does not even inquire if there is a supreme being." (Prof. Everett, of Brown University, *Internat. Jour. of Ethics*, x, 479.) No wonder then that Cotton Mather denounced ethics as "a vile form of Paganism." (Hall's "Adolescence," ii, 287-288.) Again this makes it plain that morality is not an essential of religion, and the distinction between religious morals and ethical science is the difference between the subjective and objective methods for the ascertainment of truth.

Religion Always Non-Scientific.

In his "Life of Jesus" Strauss says that "none but a book student could ever imagine that a creation of the brain, woven of poetry and philosophy, can take the place of religion." To demonstrate this we have only to substitute for the familiar terms of personal piety, which speak of the "human soul" and a humanly responsive "God," any of the modern scientific equivalents, when the metaphysics are discharged. Let me illustrate this by adapting to my use the words of another.

Will the Benedictite swell with the same tones of joy when it has sung: "Bless the Eternal Law, all ye its works, Bless the Eternal Law, O my synthesis of Organs"? Will the contrition which now cries, "A broken heart thou dost not despise," pour out its sorrows to a deaf ideal, and shed its passionate tears on an abstraction that cannot wipe them away? Will any moonlit form be seen kneeling in our Gethsemanes, and rise from prostrate anguish to sublime repose through the prayer, "O Thou Eternal not ourselves that makes for righteousness, if it be possible, let the cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as thou wilt"? Will any crucified one lose the bitterness of death in crying, "O stream of tendency, into thy current I commit my synthesis of mind"? And to the martyr, stoned to death, will the "Religion of Monism" or the "Religion of Humanity" offer any satisfactory heavenly vision of celestial reward, when he exclaims: "Great ensemble of Humanity, receive me"?

These illustrations can hardly leave any doubt upon the question that no religious appeal can ever be constructed upon any mere scientific abstractions or generalizations. It might be contended that a clear and unified view of the universe will some day remove in most individuals the present necessity for a religion, but even such a view can never perform religious functions for those in whose nature religion is still a necessity. It is the scientists who have most sinned in the matter of unwarrantedly coupling religion with science as a means, perhaps unconsciously employed, of retaining for themselves and their convictions a classification with "respectable" orthodoxy. Thus we have innumerable cults designated by such titles as "The Religion of Science," "Cosmic Religion," "Monistic Religion," "The Religion of Nature," "The Religion of Ethics," "The Religion of Humanity," etc.

Haeckel's "Monistic Religion."

Let us next examine Professor Haeckel's "Monistic Religion," which may seem to contradict our conclusions. He says: "The goddess of Truth dwells in the temple of nature, in the green woods, in the blue sea, and on the snowy summits of the hills, not in the gloom of the cloister, nor in the narrow prisons of our jail-like schools, nor in the clouds of incense of Christian churches. The path that leads to the noble divinity of truth and knowledge is the loving study of nature and its laws, the observation of the infinitely great star-world with the aid of the telescope, and the infinitely tiny cell-worlds with the aid of the microscope—not senseless ceremonies and unthinking prayer, not alms and Peter's pence. The rich gifts which the goddess of Truth bestows on us are the noble fruits of the tree of knowledge and the inestimable treasure of a clear, unified view of the world—not belief in supernatural miracles, and the illusion of an eternal life." ("Confession of Faith of a Man of Science.")

This is a rather unusual bit of poetry to come from a scientist who asserts "the unity of God and the world." Haeckel is clearly a non-religious Atheist who seemingly endeavors to escape detection by using the religious word "God" to designate what to him is a "godless" automatic, undesigned and undesigning, unthinking universe.

Truth in general is a mere abstraction and non-existent to us. We know only separate concrete aspects of truth. "The goddess of Truth" is a mere figure of speech; it can hardly become a reality to one whose devotion to the scientific method is ex-

clusive of all other methods. To even seem real this goddess must cease to be a mere fascinating verbalism—must first become objectivized so as to appear embodied in something material, as in an idol, or must become a concretized concept or the content of a genuine hallucination. Only thus could she become literally the object of religious sentiments.

Haeckel's "Religion" as Distinguished From Real Religion.

The ordinary scientist's "loving study of nature" is due solely to the obsessive influence of protracted concentration of attention. When that concentration of attention is mainly due to the influence of objective conditions, it can hardly ever be religious; but when it mainly due to a subjective feeling state, ascribed to transcendental experiences and explaining or objectivizing itself in terms of the physical universe, it will seldom escape religiousness. The scientist's "loving study of nature" is never, properly speaking, religious unless it is more intensely "loving" than a scientist necessarily experiences it to be. The exact line of demarkation is not clearly definable for, like all evolutionary transitions, they so gradually fade into each other that it is only in the extremes that we clearly see the differentiations. It therefore shows itself most clearly in the wide divergences of insanity, when we compare the relatively mild devotion of the most devoted of the scientists with the frenzy of the religious ecstatic or of the religious maniac.

This added non-scientific love-life of religion always tends towards what Haeckel denounces as "senseless ceremonies and unthinking prayer." These ceremonies are "senseless" and the prayers "unthinking" only when objectively viewed by an

unsympathetic onlooker. The subjective value of prayer and ceremonial is attested by all the evidently truthful statements of the devout. The attainment of this ecstasy which so often follows prayer and ceremonial therefore is not wholly "senseless," nor are the means, manifestly so well adjusted to that end, wholly "unthinking."

"The rich gifts which," according to Haeckel, "the goddess of Truth bestows" are also clearly non-religious or irreligious. "The noble fruits of the tree of knowledge" have ever been destructive of confidence in the transcendentalisms of religion, errors of religion, if you please, but deemed most vital to many ecstatic religionists. That it was only the "false" in their religion that was destroyed does not alter the fact that the particular individual involved deemed it an essential to his special religion; and therefore its denial is resented by him, though it be not an essential to other religionists. This tends to show that mere calm, scientific pursuit of truth cannot be made the end of anything properly and literally designated as "religion."

The scientist's search for truth is conditioned by continual openmindedness, such as precludes the intensity of devotion and certitude of a feeling-conviction which is manifestly inevitable to every truly religious life as a necessary factor of the religious method and which can attach itself only to concrete embodiments, or what seem to be such, and not to *truth* as a mere word or as an abstraction not translated into concrete images. The height of religious love can go out only to the concrete, or its *seemings*. Because of this, when carried to the extreme of enthusiasm, religion always arrives at either idolatry, hallucinations, or the passionate love of some conspicuous minister of religion, as sym-

bolizing, or in an unusual measure embodying, the divine.

So long as scientists are content to seek "God and his kingdom" in the emotionally unresponsive world of the noumenal, their deductions will ever remain scientific and their lives secular, as distinguished from religious. When what is miscalled "science" attaches itself to or grows out of the inner life of the individual, and in a rapturous ecstasy gallops to its goal, having more regard for the internal "evidence" of truth, for the mandates of its subjective love-life, than for the objective checks and the objective verity of its concepts, then, and not till then, has the essence of religion come into his being.

The converse of the foreging truth can be observed in the working of Freethought and Agnostic associations. It is the absence of this love-life which explains the evident difficulty of maintaining secular societies solely for the destruction of religious beliefs. When secular societies are not called into being by a necessity for the defense of personal liberty or material justice, they are prone to die for want of dynamics, for want of emotionalism, if you please, but more exactly for want of the dynamic impulses of the love-life which is the common heritage of all true religionists. It requires a higher degree of social consciousness than has been yet attained by any but a very few lonely individuals, to insure a strong devotion to the scientific method and its fruits, including ethical ideals derived from inter-human experience, objectively and impersonally considered.

"The inestimable treasure of a clear, unified view of the world" is an "inestimable treasure" to Professor Haeckel and other men of science only because the discoverable beneficence of the universe

seems to be inestimable, that is, of infinite possibility. "The rich gifts" which the "goddess of Truth" bestows from its tree of knowledge are inestimable only because the secrets of nature are seemingly inexhaustible in quantity, and certainly unestimable in human values. In other words, the "inestimable treasures" of science are sought for and derived only from the objective order of the relation between things. Even the scientist's sense of values, whether of nature's treasures or of psychic factors, is derived from their objective consideration, that is, in so far as he is a pure scientist. Not so with the religionists. There "the kingdom of God is within" and its "inestimable treasures" are discoverable only by the valuation of subjective states—spiritual essences, esteemed according to personal feeling standards, or ecstatic states, often described as an apprehension of divine love, or the consciousness of the divinity within.

That which distinguishes a religious belief from a like conclusion, resulting from the scientific method, is that in the former, according to the uniform testimony of all such professors of religion, conviction depends not upon conscious reasoning applied to objectives, but upon subjective experiences, ecstatic in nature. But manifestly every ecstatic state accompanied by a belief is not a religion, if any mental life is to be classified as non-religious. Although we are not yet able to differentiate the religious ecstasy in itself from other ecstasies, yet perhaps we can differentiate these states according to the resultant religious or accompanying secular content of the associated idea; that is, according to the related manifestations of its essential energy.

When a scientist grows ecstatic over a new discovery, we readily see that the thing discovered is

the objective stimulus which, through the newly acquired consciousness thereof, becomes the important determining factor of the thought-content, which is valued according to secular standards and is also conceived as secular in nature, and the thing discovered is seen to be the efficient objective causal factor of the ecstasy.

An objective study of the religious ecstatic reveals a different situation. In the first religious experience of such persons, I believe we shall always find the other ecstasies, so far physiologically indistinguishable, have been previously experienced. A new set of subjective conditions (predispositions) and objective stimuli have combined to make a particular ecstasy more intense than on any former occasion, though otherwise indistinguishable. But the religious differential cannot be made to consist in that added intensity, because equally intense feelings, which, by almost common consent, are non-religious and at present physiologically indistinguishable, exist in many, if not all, of us. Because this is so, we conclude that the differential essence of religion is not the ecstatic state, merely as such, nor in its causal antecedents, considered either separately or combined with the ecstasy. Therefore we conclude that the differential essence of religion is in the ecstasy combined with some consequent belief, interpretation, or self-explanation.

This brings us to the thought that where the scientist is ecstatic as a consequence of his consciousness of a new idea, the religionist acquires the idea in consequence of his ecstasy, that is, through an interpretation of his ecstasy. In other words, before it can be accounted as religious a subjective ecstatic experience must be interpreted, and the characteristic of the religious interpretation is that it induces a belief in a direct and immediate perception of something which the ecstatic has not theretofore adequately perceived through other methods for the acquisition of truth, and which truth is often declared by him to be unknowable through the ordinary processes involving the peripheral sense organs.

And yet we must distinguish still further because every feeling-conviction, even though including or accompanied by intense ecstasy, does not necessarily possess the qualities which we recognize as religious. For example, let us contemplate a purely erotic hallucination, consciously entertained as erotic, such as is caused by a strong sex-craving. Here, then, we may have a feeling-conviction in the objective reality of the hallucination-concept, but this is not necessarily religious.

It follows, then, that the feeling-conviction to be religious must disclose its distinguishing characteristics in some resultant or associated religious (as distinguished from a scientific) concept-content. Here again our alternative is limited, since a content limited to the recognized material of scientific investigation leaves nothing for the religious concept except that which is then believed to be beyond the realm of the materialistic (objective) method; namely, the superphysical and transcendental. But to explain an ecstatic condition by relating it to the superphysical is in effect to declare that through an ecstatic condition and without the conscious use of the peripheral sense organs (the five senses) or their testimony, one has acquired direct and immediate acquaintance of something believed to be superphysical, transcendental, etc. This conclusion manifestly is an act of interpretation of the ecstatic state, notwithstanding the subject is quite unconscious of that fact or of the psychic mechanism by which it is achieved.

Indeed, if conscious of the mental processes by which this end is attained then it would be conscious reasoning, in which the feeling-state would be objectively considered, and this fact would destroy the religious quality of the result, according to our former distinction of the religious from the secular or scientific methods. Furthermore, subsequent critical reasoning or acquaintance with the psychic mechanism of an "act of faith" or of the "inward miracle of grace" or an "intuition" if that were possible, might show that the supposed superphysical in fact was not such, and that the "testimony of the spirit" has misled. In other words the truth or error of the conclusion, according to the standards of the scientific method, or those of another religion, has nothing to do with the criteria of religion in general. In religion everyone will be a law unto himself, even when thereby he consciously subordinates himself to the authority of another, and it is enough for this purpose that he accepts the conclusions of that other, whatever it is, as coming with transcendental authority, resting upon personal superphysical evidence, which for the time being is accepted as furnishing a superrational sanction. The objective manifestations of religion, consisting of creeds, ceremonials, and institutions, are but religious means to desired ends and are the secondary consequences of the religious method and religious content, and not themselves the differential essence of religion, but the attempted objectivization thereof.

As a result of this progressive elimination of nonreligious factors, we have reduced the differential essence of religion to these elements:

(1) A subjective ecstatic experience, (2) which (since all do not have it or at least do not interpret it the same) may depend in part upon the presence

or absence of special subjective conditions ("spiritual temperament," perhaps, or only a predisposition), and (3) which experience involves the acquisition of feeling-convictions (as by some direct and immediate perception or intuition) concerning the accepted superphysical or transcendental cause or character and import of that experience, and (4) which experience is interpreted rightly or wrongly, consciously or unconsciously, as a direct, immediate and inerrant perception of the verity and superphysical import and value of some doctrine, ceremonial, or institution essential to the promotion of present material, ecstatic, superphysical or postmortem well-being.

Before closing this essay I must repeat a word of caution, that what we have defined is pure religion as distinguished from the purely secular or scientific. The thing to be remembered is that in nature there are no sharp divisions or lines of cleavage and that therefore in all probability no such thing as absolutely pure religion exists anywhere. Always we have the interaction of the two methods, the religious (or subjective) and the scientific (or objective).

Likewise we see everywhere the mixture of subject matter in our concepts of what is roughly classifiable as spiritual or mystical.

Furthermore in our analysis we have mostly had in mind the religion of our environment. In this connection we must remember that our concepts did not come into being full grown in their present form. Knowledge which was once supposed to have been intuitive or from transcendental sources is no longer so considered. Our thought of such matters varies according to the development of our intelligence and our acquaintance with mental mechanisms. Likewise much that was once considered super-

physical and imponderable is now known to be material and measurable. We now know much to be subject to change which former generations believed to be immutable. All this reminds us that where our criteria of religiosity are applied to the religious phenomena of primitive people, we must not expect the intellectual element to be developed to the relatively matured concepts of our own time.

Likewise, we see everywhere the mixture of subject matter in our concepts of what is roughly classifiable as spiritual or mystical and the material. In other words, the mystic's methods and concepts, like the co-relative scientific method and materialistic outlook, have developed together, and no person, at least of modern times, is wholly and purely religious, just as no one has wholly escaped or outgrown *all* the influences of the religious methods or their results. The differences are differences in the relative influence of the two processes in the actual life of each individual. The tendency of intellectual evolution has been to lessen the sphere of the influence of the religious mode of thinking as well as the number of subjects to which it is habitually applied.

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